

INFORMATION RELATING TO DISPOSAL OF CERTAIN
FRIAR LAND ESTATES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

MAY 31, 1910.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. OLMSTED, from the Committee on Insular Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. Res. No. 718.]

The Committee on Insular Affairs, to which was referred the several House resolutions numbered, respectively, 693, 695, 697, 699, 703, 705, and 708, respectfully reports that the said resolutions call upon the Secretary of War to furnish copies of certain letters, options, agreements, and other information specified therein touching the sale or lease of certain of the so-called friar land estates in the Philippine Islands.

The House has heretofore acted upon eight House resolutions, to wit, Nos. 594, 679, 680, 682, 689, 690, 691, and 692, all having relation to these matters, some touching one particular estate and some relating to others. House resolution 594, as amended in committee and passed by the House, reads as follows:

Resolved, That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, directed to inform the House, if not incompatible with the public interest, what lands, if any, in the Philippine Islands have been sold or leased, or contracted to be sold or leased, by the government of the Philippine Islands since the passage of the said Act of Congress, entitled "An Act temporarily to provide for the administration of affairs of civil government in the Philippine Islands, and for other purposes," approved July first, nineteen hundred and two, in lots or tracts of more than sixteen hectares to any one person or one thousand and twenty-four hectares to any corporation or association of persons, stating in each case the number of hectares so sold or leased, or contracted to be sold or leased, the name of the purchaser or lessee, and if such purchaser or lessee shall have attempted to make such purchase as the agent or factor for any other person, association, or corporation, then the name of such person, association, or corporation, if known; whether such lands so sold, leased, or contracted were a part of the general public domain of the Philippine Islands or whether the same were a part of the lands purchased by the government of the Philippine Islands pursuant to section sixty-four of the said act of Congress of July first, nineteen hundred and two, and known as the "friar lands," and the price or rental paid or to be paid for the same; also what negotiations, if any, are now pending for the sale or lease of any of such lands in the Philippine Islands in lots or tracts of more than sixteen hectares to any individual or one thousand and twenty-four hectares to any corporation or association of individuals.

That resolution was passed April 28, 1910. The Secretary of War replied upon the same date to the effect that the information was not available in his department, but that he had cabled the governor-general of the Philippine Islands to supply it. On the 5th of May, 1910, the Secretary of War replied further, giving a good deal of information contained in a cablegram received from the governor-general, and adding:

The cablegram from Manila adds that it is hoped that the detailed report will be mailed via the *Minnesota*, which sails from Manila May 7. This vessel is due to arrive at Seattle on June 4. It should be possible, therefore, to submit the detailed report to you on or about June 10.

It seems hardly necessary or desirable for the House, by a continuing series of resolutions, to call piecemeal for the same information which was demanded at wholesale in House resolution 594, and which the Philippine government, at the request of the Secretary of War, has been engaged in preparing and forwarding, and a detailed report of which is now on the high seas on its way here.

The seven additional resolutions, however, possibly include some letters, opinions, or papers not specifically called for in the resolutions heretofore adopted, and they seem also to call for information as to sales of friar lands in tracts of less than 16 hectares to one person or 1,024 hectares to one corporation or association of persons.

The committee recommends that these seven resolutions do all lie upon the table, and that in lieu thereof a single resolution be adopted which will embrace all the information, documents, and data called for in any or all of them, said resolution to be in the form following:

Resolved, That the Secretary of War be, and he is hereby, directed to furnish to the House of Representatives, if not incompatible with the public interest, complete and true copies of all reports, documents, letters, cablegrams, telegrams, memoranda, or other data contained among the records of his office, or in the files thereof, showing or tending to show, or to throw any light upon the sale or leasing or granting of options upon all or any of the so-called "friar lands" in the Philippine Islands, including all letters, opinions, requests for opinions, information, or data received from any intending purchaser or purchasers, lessor or lessors, or his or their counsel or agents, and copies of all replies thereto and of all opinions given by the Secretary of War or anyone in his department in relation to the friar lands, setting forth in each instance in detail the particular estate or estates, or parts thereof, referred to, and the number of acres involved, and all letters, cablegrams, telegrams, or reports to or from any officer, agent, or attorney of the Philippine government in relation to the sale, leasing, or optioning of all or any of said friar lands. Also, if such information shall be within his possession or ascertainable from the files or records of his office, a statement showing in detail the name of the estate, or a general description of each tract or parcel of friar lands heretofore purchased by the Philippine government, the number of acres included therein and the amount paid therefor, together with a statement showing whether all or any portion of said so-called friar estate or tract has been sold or leased or placed under option by the Philippine government, and stating in each instance the name and address of the purchaser or lessor, the number of acres involved, and the price paid or to be paid therefor, either in purchase thereof or as rental: *Provided*, That in his response hereto it shall not be necessary for the Secretary of War to furnish copies of any letters, opinions, cablegrams, telegrams, documents, or data already furnished by him in response to resolutions heretofore adopted by the House of Representatives.